Facing up to prejudice

To the Editor:

I read the opinion piece in today's *Independent* (March 6), and while I generally agree with the sentiments Ed Quillen expressed, I feel that his approach to the issue is a bit too lighthearted to be taken seriously by many. Also, I'm quite sure the irony of some of his statements will be lost on some of your readers.

At least 15 other states are considering similar legislation restricting the recognition of gay marriages. One of those states is Iowa, where a member of their House of Representatives, Ed Fallon, recently gave a speech challenging his colleagues to join him in rejecting such hate-filled, pointless legislation. I think it's unlikely any of Colorado's legislators would be willing to display the level of courage Rep. Fallon did.

— Terry Bartlett
Colorado Springs

An excerpt from Rep. Fallon's speech:

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, I have anguished over this bill, not because there is any doubt in my mind as to how I should vote, but because I believe strongly that what we are dealing with here is the defining civil rights issue of this decade....

To those in this body who know in their hearts and consciences that this bill is wrong, yet are afraid to vote against it, I ask you to consider the powerful message this bill sends to the people of Iowa. It sends the message that discrimination against gays and lesbians is acceptable and officially sanctioned. It sends the message that it's OK to deny civil and equal rights to some minority groups in our society. It sends the message that the gift of marriage is good for some yet forbidden to others. And for those in my own party who plan to vote for this bill, it sends the message that Democrats, who have traditionally stood up for and protected everyone's civil rights, aren't willing to do so in the case of homosexuals.

3/13/96 Fallon

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